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LANL Recovery Act News Flash

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Demolition Completed Ahead of Schedule, Under Budget

A Recovery Act project at Los Alamos National Laboratory that demolished 24 buildings is nearing completion six months ahead of schedule and \$16 million under budget.

The Lab received \$212 million in Recovery Act funding for environmental remediation projects, including the decontamination and demolition of 24 buildings at Technical Area 21 (TA-21) used during the Manhattan Project and Cold War eras; excavation of the Lab's oldest waste disposal site, used from 1944-48; and the installation of 16 groundwater monitoring wells.

With an initial budget of \$73 million, Project Director Al Chaloupka and his team were charged with decontaminating and demolishing buildings at TA-21. Built as long ago as the 1940s, many of the buildings were contaminated with asbestos, other chemicals and materials such as tritium, plutonium and americium. The complex also housed the world's first large-scale plutonium processing facility built immediately after World War II.

"The age of the buildings and the purposes they were used for posed a number of challenges for our team," Chaloupka said, "but the work was performed safely, efficiently and quickly."

In addition to completing demolition six months ahead of schedule, Chaloupka completed the work

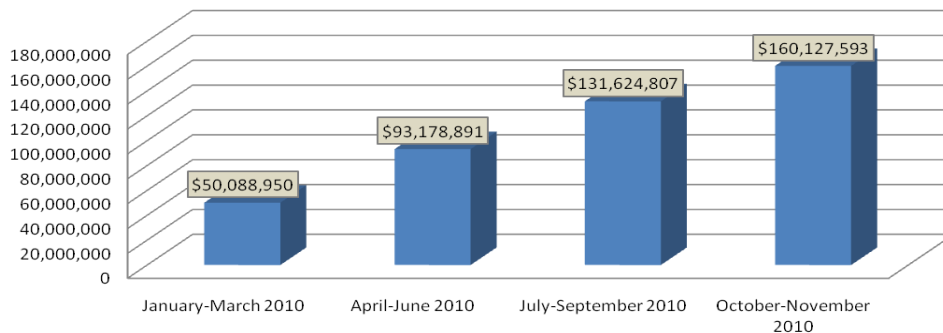


The last and largest building to be demolished at TA-21, Building 21-209, was demolished in December. The project was completed six months ahead of schedule and about \$16 million under budget.

for about \$57 million, saving about \$16 million from the initial budget. He credits efficient waste segregation, which lowers waste disposal costs, and innovative subcontracting strategies for the bulk of the savings.

"Disposal facilities charge substantially more for low-level waste than they do for industrial waste," Chaloupka said. "By separating industrial waste from low-level waste prior to demolition we were able to realize significant cost savings and provide real value for Recovery Act dollars."

**LANL Recovery Act spending
(running total)**





“About half of our budget is dedicated to disposing of waste.”—ARRA Projects Executive Director Gordon Dover

This News Flash is provided by the Environmental Programs Directorate of Los Alamos National Laboratory.

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Disposing of waste a big job

The demolition of 24 buildings generates a lot of trash, as does excavating a six-acre waste disposal site. Characterizing the waste, segregating it by category and disposing of it is a big—and expensive—endeavor.

“About half of our \$212 million budget is dedicated to disposing of waste,” said ARRA Projects Executive Director Gordon Dover. “We package the waste and it’s taken by truck to disposal facilities. The fees disposal facilities charge vary widely depending on whether it’s classified as industrial waste or low-level waste. Since we’re disposing of about 50,000 cubic yards, it’s a time-consuming and expensive part of the project.”

With building demolition complete and excavation underway at Material Disposal Area B, the number of waste shipments leaving TA-21 will increase in the next three months, Dover said.

“We will focus on shipping waste to appropriate disposal facilities, so we’ll have extra trucks on the road this winter and spring,” he said.



Demolition generates a lot of waste....



After being characterized, the waste is packaged appropriately....



And shipped to an appropriate disposal facility.

A Clean Slate



When demolition of a building is complete and the waste is hauled away, the concrete foundation of the building is removed. Then clean dirt is trucked in and graded over the site of the former building. This photo is the site of the former Building 152.